(b) whether the plan has already been presented to him envisaging to set up a Financial Stability and Development Authority (FSDA) with statutory backing with him as its Chairperson;

(c) whether FSDA would treat to regulators-SEBI, IRDA, PFRDA and RBI as equals; and

(d) if so, by what extent this committee is likely to be in operation and to what extent it has taken certain decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No decision has been taken.

Rise in price of food articles

1268. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of food articles have increased tremendously recently;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether middle and lower class are affected adversely; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation in the composite group of food items (Weight 25.43 per cent in WPI, composite primary and manufactured food items) was 14.13 per cent in October, 2009. During the same month, the WPI based inflation in food articles (Weight 15.40 per cent) and food products (Weight 10.03 per cent) were 13.32 per cent and 15.72 per cent, respectively. The details of food inflation since April, 2009 are given in table below:

Table : Food Inflation in 2009-10 (%)

WPI Food Composition	Weight (%)	Apr -09	May -09	Jun -09	Jul -09	Aug -09	Sep -09	Oct -09
Food Combined	25.43	9.04	9.56	10.80	12.09	13.32	15.30	14.13
Food articles	15.40	8.59	8.45	10.89	13.31	14.08	15.69	13.32
Food manufactured	10.03	9.88	11.69	10.63	9.77	11.87	14.56	15.72

Such levels of food inflation, affects all sections of society and particularly middle and lower class. The main reasons for inflationary trend in prices of food article are increase in demand for these commodities due to increase in population and income, hardening in international prices, changes in consumption pattern and hike in minimum support price of various agricultural

commodities. Delayed monsoon and floods in some parts of the country have also triggered expectations of lower production of food grains contributing to increase in price level of food articles.

(d) Government has taken several measures to contain the rise in prices of essential commodities/food articles, which include, reducing import duties on wheat, pulses, maize, raw sugar, etc.; imposition of stock limits in the case of paddy rice, pulses, sugar; and ban on export of non-basmati rice.

Measures to control price

†1269. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two fold rise in prices has been witnessed in the country making it difficult for common man to meet his daily needs; and

(b) if so, the details of measures adopted by Government to control prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Though the inflation based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is moderate, the inflation in the composite group of food items (Weight 25.43 per cent in WPI, comprising primary and manufactured food items) was 14.13 per cent in October, 2009. During the same month, the WPI based inflation in food articles (Weight 15.40 per cent) and food products (Weight 10.03 per cent) were 13.32 per cent and 15.72 per cent, respectively. The details of food inflation since April, 2009 are given in table below:

Table : Food Inflation in 2009-10 (%)

	Weight (%)	Apr -09	May -09	Jun -09	Jul -09	Aug -09	Sep -09	Oct -09
WPI all commodities	100.00	1.31	1.38	-1.01	-0.67	-0.17	0.50	1.34
Food Combined	25.43	9.04	9.56	10.80	12.09	13.32	15.30	14.13
Food articles	15.40	8.59	8.45	10.89	13.31	14.08	15.69	13.32
Food manufactured	10.03	9.88	11.69	10.63	9.77	11.87	14.56	15.72

Such levels of food inflation, affects the common man. Government has taken several measures to contain the rise in prices of essential commodities, which include, reducing import duties on wheat, pulses, maize, raw sugar etc; imposition of stock limits in the case of paddy rice, pulses, sugar; and ban on export of non-basmati rice.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.